

dred and forty days, according to the greater or less warmth of the weather. Mr. Young considers that the fish passes through the condition of parr, whose characteristics are the transverse bands, and assumes the silvery appearance of the smolt in about twelve months from the time of being hatched; and he is disposed to think, that some of the young fish which have been deposited as ova, and therefore hatched late in the season, do not assume the smolt appearance, nor go down to the sea at the end of the first year. Prof. Twiss called attention to the importance of these observations in connexion with the preservation of the young fish, which have hitherto not unfrequently been taken and destroyed, as if a distinct species of trout; to the increased facility of propagating peculiar breeds or races of fish, by transporting the ova, when impregnated, in water from one river to another; and to the great value of careful notices as to the spawning-seasons of the fish of different rivers, in connexion with a more discriminating system of legal regulations as to the fence months. Dr. Buckland gave some account of his visit to the experimental ponds at Drumlanrig, in company with Prof. Agassiz, who was himself conducting a series of analogous experiments on the trout of the lake of Neufchatel. He alluded to the great probable advantages of hatching the ova in artificial ponds, with a view to the preservation of the young fry. In the experiments of Agassiz, and Sir F. Mackenzie, Bart., it was found necessary to feed the young fry with the paunches of sheep.

Prof. Twiss afterwards read a letter from Mr. Young, of Invershin Bonar Bridge, N.B., respecting the propagation of Eels. The following are the more important conclusions:—The adults spawn in the summer months, in sand and gravel banks in the rivers, and do not descend to brackish water to deposit their spawn. The spawn becomes vivid in the following September and October, but remains under the gravel, in the spawning-beds, until the following April or May, depending entirely upon the heat and cold of the weather; and the adult eels, in place of emigrating, get into holes in the banks of the rivers, and underneath large stones, as soon as the water turns cold, and remain stationary until the warmth of summer again heats the water of the rivers.

MISCELLANEOUS.

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF CUSCUTA.

THE following description of a new *Cuscuta* by Dr. L. Pfeiffer of Cassel, occurs in the 'Botanische Zeitung' of Oct. 13, 1843. As some of the plants on which it is found are common with us, it is not improbable it may be met with in this country.

Cuscuta hassiaca, Pfr. Caule ramoso, floribus irregulariter fasciculatis, pedunculatis, fasciculis et floribus singulis bractea fultis, calyce campanulato 5-fido, tubo corollæ campanulato, limbum æquante, squamis convergentibus clauso, 5-fido, laciniis expansis, apice subcorniculato inflexis; stamin. 5 anthera brevioribus; stylis 2 filiformibus, stigmatibus capitatis.

This plant was collected on a very dry and sunny bank near Cassel, parasitical on *Anthemis Cotula*, *Barkhausia fatida*, *Sonchus asper*, *Galium verum*, *Torilis nodosa*, &c., sometimes twining round them and adhering by lateral tubercles like *C. Europaa*, and at others lying detached in dense yellow masses on the ground. It is distinguished by its pedunculated flowers and capitate stigmas from all the other German Cuscutas. On referring to Dietrich's 'Synopsis' (1840), Dr. Pfeiffer found the characters of *C. Americana*, Pers., to come pretty near to it, but to differ in the umbellate flowers. From the Bengal *C. sulcata*, Roxb., it is distinguished by the absence of the furrows in the calyx, &c. The orange-yellow colour of the stems renders it very conspicuous when growing in any quantity — A. HENFREY.

Observations on the Habits of the Python Natalensis. By Thomas S. Savage, M.D., of Cape Palmas, Western Africa.

This serpent, when spoken of by travellers and residents, has been erroneously called 'Boa,' and thus confounded with the South American genus. There is a striking similarity, however, between the two, both in structure and habits, so that were it not for the arrangement of the subcaudal scales, one would be identified with the other.

During my residence here, which has been five years, I have seen a number of individuals of the serpent, but one however alive, which is the specimen I now send.

The first of which I had any authentic account was one that appeared on the Mission premises of the A. B. C. F. Missions. The facts in the case have been kindly furnished by my friend the Rev. J. L. Wilson. He informed me that it was attracted into the yard by a dog. He says in answer to my inquiries, "He was 14 feet long, and held the dog not more than two minutes before the natives came to his relief. I suppose that the snake had stretched himself across the path, and seized the dog in the act of jumping over him. I was too much frightened to observe what was the shape of the snake while he held the dog in his folds. I am inclined to think that he had nothing to fasten his tail to while he held the dog. None of the bones of the dog were broken, and I am inclined to think that he received no injury whatever.

"The snake did not let go his hold till he had received a fatal blow from a bill-hook. The dog then leaped up suddenly several times, as if he were not sure of having been extricated, ran around and entered the back-yard, but for some time appeared afraid of everything and everybody. His back only was *slimed*, and this could not be washed off, but gradually wore away in the course of a week or ten days."

The next individual of which I have heard was attracted into the house of a colonist, an old woman, by a hen and her chickens. An unusual noise was heard under the bed in the night, which awakened the woman. By a light she discovered the serpent in the act of seizing its prey; affrighted, she fled to the house of a neighbour, who came and captured him with his gun.

The third individual appeared upon my own premises early in 1837. An antelope was discovered by some workmen a short distance from